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Sidney Nolan's Kelly series comes to Geelong

Saturday 2 March to Sunday 26 May 2019
Geelong Gallery
Entry fees apply—open daily 10am to 5pm

For the first time in 15 years, the National Gallery of Australia's collection of Sidney Nolan's 'Ned Kelly' paintings is touring Australia in its entirety. The tour, spanning four states and one territory, features Geelong Gallery as the exclusive Victorian venue. The national tour gives Australians across the country the chance to experience some of the most famous and poignant masterpieces of 20th century Australian art.

While the Kelly paintings have been exhibited internationally at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, they have rarely visited the far corners of Australia.

'It is essential that all Australians have equal opportunity to access these remarkable works,' said Nick Mitzevich, NGA Director. 'By experiencing this iconic group of paintings with their radical style, and anti-establishment mythology firsthand, new generations gain insight into the work of one of our most well-known artists.'

From 1946–47, Nolan developed an original and starkly simplified image of Ned Kelly, which quickly became a national symbol—part of the shared iconography of Australia. The NGA acquired its first Ned Kelly work from the series in 1972, *Death of Sergeant Kennedy at Stringybark Creek* 1946. In 1977, Sunday Reed donated to the NGA 25 of the 27 paintings from Nolan's first exhibited Kelly series. Together, these 26 paintings provide a masterclass on Australian art history and the development of a new figuration and landscape painting in Australian art.

Jason Smith, Director & CEO, Geelong Gallery says "This exhibition will be immensely popular with the Greater Geelong community and a major drawcard for visitors to our great city and region. "Following the success of the Art Gallery of New South Wales' 2018 Archibald Prize, we look forward to presenting this major exhibition to the community. We are also thrilled about the educational opportunities and our ability to continue to demonstrate the capacity and audience reach of Geelong Gallery ahead of potential City Hall changes."



Sidney Nolan
Ned Kelly 1946
from the Ned Kelly series 1946–47
enamel paint on composition board
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra,
Gift of Sunday Reed 1977



Sidney Nolan
Stringybark Creek 1947
from the Ned Kelly series 1946–47
enamel paint on composition board
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Sunday Reed 1977

City of Greater Geelong Mayor, Bruce Harwood says "The City of Greater Geelong is pleased to support Geelong Gallery in its hosting of this iconic exhibition through Geelong Major Events funding. Bringing this internationally significant work to Geelong is another drawcard for the city and supports our vision of a clever and creative city-region."

Sidney Nolan—from the collection

Concurrent to the National Gallery of Australia's 'Sidney Nolan Ned Kelly series' exhibition, Geelong Gallery will be exhibiting 'Sidney Nolan—from the collection'. This selection of works drawn primarily from the Gallery's collection reveals the materials, processes and subjects that were of interest to Sidney Nolan in the years following his acclaimed Kelly series of enamel paintings from 1946–47.

Media contact—

For further information, to request interviews or high-resolution images, please contact:

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Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series is a National Gallery of Australia exhibition

This travelling exhibition is supported by the Australian Government through Visions of Australia and the National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach Program.

NGA
National Gallery of Australia



This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program



This exhibition is supported by the National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach Program, an Australian Government program aiming to improve access to the national collections for all Australians

Exhibition partners



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